

C. R.
MIN. OF HEALTH

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Annual Report
UPON THE
Public Health & Sanitary Conditions
OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT
OF
LEIGHTON BUZZARD
FOR THE YEAR

1939

BY

JONATHAN GROGONO, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.



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TO THE LEIGHTON BUZZARD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I beg to present the Annual Report for the year 1939.

Copies of this Report, as you are aware, must be sent to the Ministry of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	2487
Population (estimated to middle of 1939)					7260
Number of inhabited houses (1939)	...				2176
Rateable value	...	...	...	...	£39,441
Sum represented by penny rate	...				£156
	Total		M.	F.	
Live Births	{	Legitimate	112	51	61
	{	Illegitimate	2	1	1
Birth Rate (R.G.) 15.56					
	Total		M.	F.	
Still Births	{	Illegitimate	0	0	0
	{	Legitimate	2	2	0
Rate per 1,000 total births 17.6					
Deaths	...	...	94	48	46
Death Rate 12.94					

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

No. of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth 1

Deaths of Infants under one year old:

Legitimate, 7; Illegitimate, 0; Total, 7.

Rate per 1000 births, 61.4.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Scarlet Fever (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Diphtheria (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	11

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

MEDICAL.

A part-time Medical Officer is employed, together with a Sanitary Inspector, an Assistant Sanitary Inspector, and Veterinary Meat Inspector.

HOSPITALS.

All infectious cases sent away for isolation were treated at the Dunstable and District Isolation Hospital, the cases being removed by the Hospital's own ambulance in accordance with the County Scheme.

140 cases of Infectious Disease were notified during the year, 17 of the cases being sent to Dunstable in accordance with the above scheme. The remaining cases were isolated and nursed at home.

Patients with Tuberculosis can attend at the Dispensary, which is conveniently held at Luton, and they can be admitted to the Mogerhanger Sanatorium.

Venereal cases can be treated at the Bute Hospital, Luton, and the County Hospital, Bedford.

By arrangement of the County Council, cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum can be sent to St. Margaret's Hospital, London, S.W.1, for treatment.

There is a St. John motor ambulance available, at a local garage, which is a great convenience and comfort in the removal of special or accident cases to the hospitals.

There are three permanently resident midwives in the town. A Health Visitor also visits the homes and gives instruction and advice.

Specimens and swabs are sent to the Clinical Research Association for microscopic and bacteriological examination.

The Council grants supplies of Antitoxin and Scarlet Fever Serum.

An Infant Welfare Centre is conducted in the town, a lady Health Visitor being present each week. She is assisted by the local nurse and several ladies in the town. A medical officer also attends. It is a very popular centre.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY.

The town is now mainly supplied with water from the new 24in. diameter bore hole, which is sunk 210 feet into the lower greensand near the site of the old bore hole at the Council's Water Works in Stanbridge Road.

The water is pumped by a five-stage 6in. diameter centrifugal pump, driven by a 26 h.-p. electric motor, which delivers a supply of 12,000 gallons per hour to the reservoir, after same has been treated by three 8 feet diameter pressure filters for the extraction of iron.

The old well and 8in. diameter bore hole, with one set of lift pumps driven by a 25 h.-p. gas engine is still used at regular intervals and maintained as an alternative supply.

It is proposed to instal an electrically driven 6in. diameter centrifugal pump in the well as the present plant is very old and would be quite inadequate to maintain a sufficient supply to the town in the event of a breakdown in the new plant.

The reservoir at Shenley Hill has a capacity of 400,000 gallons, which is equal to two days supply.

The water from both supplies is perfectly satisfactory for drinking purposes as proved by the following bacteriological and chemical analysis:—

WATER ANALYSIS.

				Parts per	Grains per
				100,000	Gallon.
(1.) CHEMICAL.					
Total solids (dried at 120° C.)...				34.0	23.8
Combined chlorine ...	...			2.50	1.75
equivalent to NaCl ...		...		4.13	2.89
Nitric nitrogen ...	...	...		0.05	0.04
Nitrous nitrogen...	...	...		Nil	Nil
Ammoniacal nitrogen ...	...	...		0.0038	0.0027
Albumenoid nitrogen ...	...	...		0.0036	0.0025
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at					
27° C ...	...	...	...	0.005	0.004
Lead or Copper ...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Temporary hardness (equivalent to					
CaCo ₃) ...	...	...	...	18.8	13.2
Permanent hardness ...	...	...		5.5	3.8
Total hardness ...	...	...	...	24.3	17.0

(II.) BACTERIOLOGICAL (cultural and microscopical).

Average number of organisms producing visible colonies on gelatine plates, incubated at 20-22° C. for 3 days = 15 per millilitre

Average number of organisms producing visible colonies on agar plates, incubated at 37-5° C. for 2 days = 5 per millilitre

B. Coli not found in 100 ml.

Streptococci not found in 30 ml.

B. Enteriditis Sporogenes ... not found in 100 ml.

Remarks:—

Judged by the above results, this water may be regarded as of a very good quality.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The Sewerage of the District is on the " Separate System " and the sewage from the low lying parts of the town is lifted by four sets of ejectors to the main sewers which gravitate to the Sewage Disposal Works.

The sewage is treated at the Sewage Disposal Works by means of Settling Tanks, three 74ft. diameter clinker filters and two Humus Tanks.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The collection of house refuse is efficiently carried out by the Council's own staff and each house is visited once a week.

The Council's controlled refuse tip in Vandyke Road continues to give satisfaction.

Street gullies are frequently cleansed and flushed out with clean water.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The rivers and streams in the Urban area were periodically inspected and were found to be free from any serious pollution.

DISINFECTION.

A stock of disinfectants is kept at the Council's Store Yard, West Street, and the public can have a full supply on application, of which they take advantage.

Premises are always disinfected after cases of infectious disease, and after deaths from tuberculosis.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There is now only one common lodging house in the district, which is kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

SCHOOLS.

The Elementary Schools of the town are as follows:—

Beaudesert: Senior Boys and Mixed Infants.

Bassett Road: Senior Girls.

Pulford: Junior Boys.

St. Andrew's: Junior Girls.

The sanitary accommodation is sufficient and in good order.

There is a Secondary School in the town for boys and girls, which is well provided with all sanitary arrangements.

CAMPING SITES.

There was only one licence issued under section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, which was for a private party of eight persons.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There is one swimming bath in the town situated in the grounds of the Cedars School for the use of the pupils and members of the staff. The bath is of modern construction and is provided with a proper purification plant.

There is a large natural swimming pool on the outskirts of the town which is open to the public but is privately owned. The surface of the pool covers an area of approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres and the water always appears to be in good condition. This pool is the headquarters of the Leighton Buzzard Swimming Club.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

Four Council Houses found to be infested with bugs were fumigated with Hydrogen Cyanide, the tenants remaining away from the houses until the operator had tested the premises, furniture, bedding, etc., and certified same to be free from danger.

The furniture, household goods and bedding of 24 families re-housed from unfit dwellings were removed and fumigated in mobile fumigation chambers by Hydrogen Cyanide, the furniture, etc., being placed in the new houses and the keys being, retained by the operator until the whole of the furniture, bedding, etc., had been tested and certified free from danger.

The whole of the fumigation work was carried out by a competent firm of Fumigating Contractors and has proved quite satisfactory.

Houses are periodically visited by the Sanitary Inspector and tenants are encouraged to report any signs of infestation or re-infestation of their houses.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND KNACKERS' YARDS.

There are 8 slaughter-houses in the district and with the exception of 1 slaughter-house they were generally found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

There is one knacker's yard in the district and during the year considerable improvements have been carried out to the premises.

BAKE-HOUSES.

There are 8 bake-houses in the district, one of which is underground.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The principal factories in the town which employ a considerable number of hands, are:—

Three agricultural iron works, three tile works, a concrete works, a cement works, brickworks, laundry, a large corset factory and a ladies' mantle factory. There are also the Gas Works and two flour mills.

The principal workshops are:—

Basket-makers, brushmakers, printers, dressmakers, tin-smiths, builders and saddlers. Many of the workshops on the register comprise domestic workshops, where only members of the family are employed.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Unemployment figures during 1939, for Leighton Buzzard, showed a slight decrease and the average number of unemployed during the year was 130, including both sexes.

HOUSING STATISTICS.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—
 - (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 190
 - (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 452
 - (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under subhead (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 ... 21
 - (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 261
 - (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... Nil
 - (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 22
2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers... 17
3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:
 - A. Proceedings under section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.
 - (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs... 4
 - (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:
 - (a) By owners ... 7
 - (b) By local authority in default of owners ... Nil
 - B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:
 - (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... 3

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :				
(a)	By owners	...	...	3
(b)	By local authority in default of owners	...	...	Nil
C. Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :				
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	2
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	33
D. Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :				
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	...	Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...	...	Nil
Total number of new houses erected in 1936 classified as follows :				
	By the Local Authority	...	...	Nil
	By private enterprise	...	...	21

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.

1. GENERAL.

Number of Inspections	...	...	548
Complaints received	...	...	48
Nuisances detected without complaint	...	...	3
Notices served, informal	...	...	43
Notices served, statutory	...	...	5
Nuisances abated :			
(a)	by persons responsible	...	35
(b)	by Council	...	Nil

2. HOUSE NUISANCES.

Roofs repaired	...	...	...	19
Guttering and rainwater pipes cleaned out or repaired	...	...	...	14
Dirty houses cleansed and distempered	...	...	...	5
Walls and ceilings repaired	...	...	...	30
Floors repaired	...	...	...	40
Ventilation improved	...	...	...	19
New sinks provided	...	...	...	30
External wall repaired	...	...	...	11
Pavements repaired	...	...	...	18
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	203

3. DRAINS, WATER CLOSETS, ETC.

New drains laid	...	...	...	18
Drains cleared or repaired	...	...	...	19
Water closets repaired	...	...	...	14
Sanitary galvanized ashbins provided	...	...	...	15
Additional Water Closets provided	...	...	...	17
Privy Ashpits converted into Pail Closets	...	...	...	Nil
Pail Closets repaired	...	...	...	Nil

4. SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number on Register	...	...	...	8
Number of inspections	...	...	...	50
Number of defects found	...	...	...	2
Number remedied	...	...	...	2

5. BAKEHOUSES.

Number on Register	...	...	...	8
Number of inspections	...	...	...	40
Number of defects found	...	...	...	3
Number remedied	...	...	...	3

6. DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

Number of Dairymen or Purveyors of Milk	...	...	...	29
Number of Cowkeepers	...	...	...	6
Number of inspections	...	...	...	65
Number of defects found	...	...	...	Nil
Number remedied	...	...	...	Nil

7. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Number on Register	...	...	...	103
Number of inspections	...	...	...	107
Number of defects found	...	...	...	4
Number remedied	...	...	...	4

8. VARIOUS.

Removal of animals improperly kept	...	...	...	2
Visits to infected houses	...	...	...	21
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	17
Other items: One Common Lodging House inspections	...	...	...	12

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

The milk supply is obtained from the Urban District and the Eaton Bray and Wing Rural Districts. Inspections of the supplies, premises and cowsheds have been made.

MEAT INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Number of Inspections, 872.

CARCASSES CONDEMNED.

	CATTLE	SHEEP
All diseases except Tuberculosis		
Whole Carcases condemned	Nil	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil
Tuberculosis only		
Whole Carcases condemned	5	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil

A store is provided at the Council's Depot for the temporary storing of unsound meat.

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.

Specimens for the Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of milk and food are sent to the Clinical Research Association.

MEASURES RELATING TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

DIPHTHERIA.

Fourteen cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year. They were treated in hospital and all made good recoveries.

SCARLET FEVER.

Three cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year. All made good recoveries.

PNEUMONIA (ALL FORMS).

Nine cases of Pneumonia (all forms) were notified during the year. Two of the cases proved fatal.

ENTERIC FEVER.—No cases notified.

TUBERCULOSIS.

One case of Pulmonary Tuberculosis was notified during the year. There were two deaths from this disease.

There was one case of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified during the year.

ERYSIPELAS.

Three cases of Erysipelas were notified. They were isolated and nursed at home, and all recovered.

CHICKEN POX.

Chicken Pox continues to be officially notifiable. 108 cases were notified during the year. These occurred in school children, but no complication ensued.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

One case notified, which proved fatal.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.—No cases notified.

SMALL POX.—No cases notified.

Your Obedient Servant,

JONATHAN GROGONO,

Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1939 and previous Years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each Year. *	TOTAL BIRTHS.				TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Live Births.		Still Births.		Number.	Rate.	of Non-Residents registered in the district.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Under 1 year of age		At all Ages.	
		Number.	Rate.	No.	Rate.					Number	Rate per 1000 Nett Births.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1933	6950	83	11.98	4	0.57	89	12.9	6	10	5	56.0	93	13.4
1934	6898	100	14.49	2	0.29	82	11.8	10	20	4	40.0	92	13.3
1935	7200	89	12.31	0.0	0.0	81	11.25	9	16	7	73.6	90	12.5
1936	7200	99	13.75	3	0.42	109	15.14	4	26	6	60.6	131	18.2
1937	7004	91	13.00	3	0.40	92	13.15	10	19	6	66.0	101	14.43
1938	6989	101	14.45	2	0.20	75	10.8	5	19	7	69.3	89	12.72
1939	7260	114	15.56	2	0.18	90	12.4	5	9	7	61.4	94	12.94

* 7030—1931 Census.

TABLE II.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1939.

Disease.	Number of Cases Notified.											Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.			
	At all ages.	Under 1 yr.	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 35	35 to 45			45 to 65	65 upwards	
Small Pox ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...
Diphtheria ...	14	...	...	3	...	2	5	2	...	1	1	1	...	14	...	...
Enteric Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Puerperal Fever	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1

Puerperal Pyrexia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia (all forms)...	9	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	4	1	...	...	2
Opthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	...	...	...
Chicken Pox ...	108	...	2	10	2	22	65	...	5	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	138	...	3	14	2	24	73	2	5	5	2	6	2	17	...	3

TABLE III.

Cases of Tuberculosis notified during 1939.

Age Periods.			New Cases.				Deaths.			
			Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
35	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
55	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Totals	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	2	...	...

Causes of Death during Year 1939.

[illegible]

TABLE V.

Infantile Mortality during the year 1939.

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various Ages
under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.		Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 month.	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
All Causes.	Certified ...	3	...	...	4	1	1	1	...	7
	Uncertified ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{	Small-pox ...									
	Chicken-pox ...									
	Measles ...									
	Scarlet Fever ...									
	Whooping Cough ...									
	Diphtheria and Croup ...									
	Erysipelas ...									
{	Tuberculous Meningitis ...									
	Abdominal Tuberculosis ...									
	Other Tuberculous Diseases ...									
	Meningitis, <i>not Tuberculous</i>						1			1
	Convulsions ...					1		1		2
	Laryngitis ...									
	Bronchitis ...									
	Pneumonia (all forms) ...									
{	Diarrhoea ...									
	Enteritis ...									
	Gastritis ...									
	Syphilis ...									
	Rickets ...									
	Suffocation, overlying ...									
	Injury at Birth ...									
	Atelectasis ...									
{	Congenital Malformations									
	Premature Birth ...	2	1		3					3
	Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus ...	1			1					1
	Violence ...									
	Accidental & Other Causes									
Totals ...		3			4	1	1	1		7

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Cases.			Vision unimpaired	Vision impaired.	Total Blindness.	Deaths.
	Notified.	Treated.					
		At Home.	In hospital.				
Under one year.



